

I'll Go to the Ends of the Earth for You

Deciding Among Exploration Proposals

Directions:

You are a ruler of a powerful European nation during the age of exploration. Many adventures come to you, seeking financial support for voyages of exploration and conquest. Each comes with a plan designed to convince you that he can gain fantastic wealth and new territory for your nation. Unfortunately, you cannot afford to fund every proposal. Read the following proposals and choose the three you will support. Write an argument that states the reasons for your choices.

Proposal 1 I propose sailing to the New World to seek a northern sea route to Japan and the riches of the Orient. Provide me with money and support, and I will find a new route that will bring wealth and power to your nation. I will need only a small crew of eighteen men and will give you one fifth of the treasures I find.

Proposal 2 It is rumored that wealth beyond imagination lies in the unexplored world across the sea. My men and I seek your support to sail to these lands and return with gold and silver to fill your treasury. As we explore, we will claim the lands in your name and convert the natives from their heathen religions to Christianity. With control of these new lands and peoples, your nation will become the most powerful on earth.

Proposal 3 I know I can bring wealth in the form of gold and precious metals from the lands across the sea. However, we must also explore and chart this unknown land. I seek your support to journey to the northern areas of the "New World," to chart the waterways and begin settlements. These settlements will assure your claim to the new lands and their riches.

Proposal 4 What is wealth to a king who must at some point die? I propose to search for the fabled Fountain of Youth and to return with its magic waters. This is certainly worth more than any amount of gold and silver. However, my men and I will also fill your treasury as we conquer the new lands and claim them for you.

Proposal 5 Provide me with necessary funds, and I will bring fame and fortune to our great nation. I will raid the ships of our enemies, seize their cargoes, sink their vessels, and bring back wealth untold. My raids will challenge and defeat our enemies so that we can become the greatest nation on earth. I realize you may have to deny knowledge of me and my activities to make it appear that you do not approve of them.